

Claims

- [c1] A method for transmitting workflow-enabled electronic mail message from a user of a workflow system to a recipient, comprising:
- creating an email message to the recipient;
 - determining a network address;
 - embedding a link to the determined network address in the email message to the recipient;
 - associating a process of the workflow system with the determined network address; and
 - sending the email message having the link to the determined network address to the recipient.
- [c2] The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network address comprises selecting the network address from a list of predefined network addresses.
- [c3] The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network address comprises generating the network address.
- [c4] The method of claim 3, wherein generating the network address comprises randomly or psuedo-randomly generating the network address.
- [c5] The method of claim 3, wherein generating the network address comprises generating the network address based on at least in part on information about at least one of at least the created email message, the recipient, the workflow process and the user.
- [c6] The method of claim 1, further comprising associating the determined network address with the email message.
- [c7] The method of claim 6, wherein associating the determined network address with the email message comprises associating an email address of the recipient to which the created email will be sent with the determined network address.
- [c8] The method of claim 1, wherein:
- determining a network address comprises determining a plurality of different network addresses; and

embedding a link to the determined network address into the email message to the recipient comprises embedding a plurality of links into the email message, each link being to one of the plurality of determined network addresses.

[c9] The method of claim 8, wherein associating a process of the workflow system with the determined network address comprises associating a different state of the associated process of the workflow system with each of the plurality of determined network addresses.

[c10] A method for transmitting workflow-enabled electronic mail message from a user of a workflow system to a recipient, comprising:
creating an email message to the recipient;
determining an email response address;
incorporating the determined email response address into the email message to the recipient;
associating a process of the workflow system with the determined email response address; and
sending the email message having the incorporated email response address to the recipient.

[c11] The method of claim 10, wherein determining the email response address comprises selecting the email response address from a list of predefined email response addresses.

[c12] The method of claim 10, wherein determining the email response address comprises generating the email response address.

[c13] The method of claim 12, wherein generating the email response address comprises randomly or psuedo-randomly generating the email response address.

[c14] The method of claim 12, wherein generating the email response address comprises generating the email response address based on at least in part on information about at least one of at least the created email message, the recipient, the workflow process and the user.

- [c15] The method of claim 10, further comprising associating the determined email response address with the email message.
- [c16] The method of claim 15, wherein associating the determined email response address with the email message comprises associating an email address of the recipient to which the created email will be sent with the determined email response address.
- [c17] The method of claim 10, wherein incorporating the determined email response address into the email message to the recipient comprises incorporating the determined email response address into a reply-to portion of the email message.
- [c18] The method of claim 10, wherein incorporating the determined email response address into the email message to the recipient comprises incorporating the determined email response address into a selectable element of the email message.
- [c19] The method of claim 10, wherein:
 - determining an email response address comprises determining a plurality of different email response addresses; and
 - incorporating the determined email response address into the email message to the recipient comprises incorporating the plurality of determined email response addresses into the email message.
- [c20] The method of claim 19, wherein associating a process of the workflow system with the determined email response address comprises associating a different state of the associated process of the workflow system with each of the plurality of determined email response addresses.
- [c21] A method for accessing a workflow process using a workflow-enabled email message, comprising:
 - receiving the workflow-enabled email message that includes a link to a network address associated with the workflow process, wherein the network address is specific to the workflow process and to the email message;

selecting the link to access the network address, wherein, in response, the workflow system provides access to the workflow process.

[c22] The method of claim 21, further comprising:
receiving a request to provide authentication from the workflow system in response to selecting the link; and
providing the requested authentication to the workflow system, the workflow system denying access to the workflow process if the requested authentication is not valid.

[c23] A method for providing access to a workflow process in response to receiving a network address that is associated with the workflow process, comprising
receiving the network address from a user;
determining if the user from which the network address is received is a valid user of that network address; and
providing access to the user to the workflow process only if user from which the network address is received is determined to be a valid user of that network address.

[c24] The method of claim 23, wherein determining if the user from which the network address is received is a valid user of that network address comprises comparing an email address provided by the user to an email address associated with the network address for the user.